

HONDA

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March 17, 2011

Chairman John Fonfara
Chairwoman Vicki Nardello
Energy and Technology Committee
Room 3900, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: SB 1168

Dear Chairman Fonfara and Chairwoman Nardello:

Honda applauds the purpose of SB 1168 and the committee's desire to encourage the purchase and use of alternative fuel vehicles. Honda currently offers a fuel cell electric vehicle, a dedicated natural gas vehicle, many hybrid vehicles and will soon bring a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle and an electric vehicle to the U.S. market.

As you are aware, incentives, both financial and non-financial, are useful in encouraging early adopters to accept a new technology which is often expensive or less convenient to use. At this time, we believe that incentives are no longer necessary to advance hybrid sales in the U.S. Conventional gasoline-electric hybrids are widely available and no longer have significant incremental costs. They are mainstream and do not need incentives as other alternative fuel technologies do. For this reason, we believe that the hybrid incentives proposed in Section 2 of this bill are not necessary.

We ask instead that Section 3 of the bill be amended to offer HOV lane access to dedicated natural gas vehicles. Unlike hybrids that use gasoline as their primary fuel source, dedicated natural gas vehicles can only run on natural gas. For this reason, they offer 100% petroleum displacement. The Civic GX is a Super Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (SULEV) for tailpipe emissions and has zero evaporative emissions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has called Honda's Civic GX the "cleanest internal combustion vehicle on earth." The Civic GX was recently named the "Greenest Vehicle" for the 8th consecutive year by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy.

Further, in light of these characteristics we also ask that Section 4 of the bill be amended to include dedicated natural gas vehicles in the list of vehicles eligible for the tax incentives. The incremental cost of the Civic GX (cost difference between a natural gas-powered Civic and a comparably equipped gasoline-powered Honda Civic LX) for Model Year 2011 is \$6,935. A state incentive to for natural gas vehicle users would help level the playing field.

Encouraging the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles is consistent with the stated intent of this bill, and we ask for your consideration of these amendments.

Please feel free to contact me at the above number or Patrick McCabe, our Hartford representative at 860-293-2581. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Ember A. Brillhart
Manager, State Relations